John Armstrong

Katherine Tipp and her mission trips

Missionary work is an important part in shaping a Catholic faith life. It requires patience and humility to take time away from your everyday lives and use it towards a good cause. It is a way to offer your time and special talents for the good of others. Either locally or internationally, individuals should look into some form of service and to attend a mission trip when presented the opportunity.

One student in particular seized this opportunity when she was just 14. Katherine Tipp, a member of the senior class has been attending mission trips with her family to Guatemala since her freshman year of high school. “My family had wanted to go on mission trips for a long time, but we couldn’t seem to find the time or the place to go,” said Katherine.

She and her family discovered that her grandmother’s church provided mission trips to Guatemala and they decided they would participate.

She goes to Guatemala for five to six weeks in the summer, and for one week in November. She has been to Guatemala at least nine times and soon to be ten this summer.

She described the town called Chichicastenango, located four and a half hours from Guatemala City, as very rural and popular with European tourists. “It’s like a large open-air market” Tipp said.

The region has many problems. Local policy states that if a child has no shoes, he or she can’t go to school; therefore there is high rate of illiteracy. In addition to low education levels, alcohol abuse is common.

Katherine said her accommodations are decent. Her hotel has running water, internet and cell phone capability, both of which were installed in the past year. Tipp said, “The water there is undrinkable and so we have to use bottled water for everything like brushing our teeth and for drinking.”

While in Guatemala, Katherine and her family perform many arduous important tasks. These include building houses, installing filter systems for houses and water, and helping out in three different feeding programs. Katherine heartily enjoys her mission trips to Guatemala.

She said, “I plan to live there after college.”

She said this with the utmost firmness and confidence and hopes her efforts will inspire others to involve themselves in mission trips.